



Firearms For Freemen

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By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
Their flag to April's breeze unfurl'd;
Here once the embattl'd farmers stood,
And fired the shot heard 'round the world.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

The dedication of those citizen-patriots to the winning and preservation of their freedom has long been recognized---but of equal importance is the point that they were armed, and thus able, as well as willing, to fight for their freedom.

When their forefathers fled the tyranny of old world oppression to build a new world in the wilderness that was America, they brought their firearms. And it was those firearms, which provided game for the table and protection from predators and hostiles, that enabled them to carve out a place to survive in this new world.

When the colonists won their freedom from England, a new nation was born. But it floundered under the Articles of Confederation and a new form of government had to be devised. The document drafted by that group of men who gathered in Philadelphia in the hot summer of 1787 was unique in human history--- for it created a government founded on the basis that people have all rights and a government has none---except those granted to it by the people. The founding fathers saw no need to enumerate in the Constitution the rights that were the people's, for those rights are without number. They listed the specific powers that the people were granting to the central government, in the limited form of government they were creating.

But many outstanding patriots of the day, like Patrick Henry, were objecting that too much power was being granted to the new government. To win support for the proposed Constitution, it was agreed that additional clauses would be drafted to further restrict and clarify the powers of the central government.

These additional clauses that were added to the Constitution are today known as the Bill of Rights. Each is a restrictive and declaratory clause intended to prevent the federal government from misconstruing or abusing its powers. The second of these amendments to the Constitution says: "A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed".

It is important to realize that the second amendment does not grant to the people the right to keep and bear arms. What it does, is recognize that the right to keep and bear arms is an inherent right of the people---and then declare that this inalienable right must not be violated by the government.

The inherent right of the people to keep and bear arms was guarded jealously, not just so people would be able to provide game for their tables, or even that they would be able to repel a foreign invader. The vital and primary purpose was to enable the people to be able at all times to protect their freedom, if necessary from the federal government. The drafters of the Constitution and the second amendment recognized the danger that someday in the future, the military forces might be used by those in power to enforce a dictatorship over the people. In their wisdom, they recognized that the best defense against such an occurrence was a well armed citizenry. And the citizen today must be armed for the same primary purpose as was his forefathers---to be able to protect his loved ones and his property from seizure by political exploiters---and common criminals. Newspapers daily provide the obvious proof that protection is needed against the common criminal. Equally obvious should be the fact that armed citizens are better able to protect themselves and their loved ones. Shrewsbury, Massachusetts, a suburb of Worcester, 9:20 on a dark and wintry Sunday evening in March, 1972. Mrs. Thomas Gigliotti answers the doorbell and is met by three armed gunmen who force their way into her home. One of the gunmen seizes Mrs. Gigliotti while the other two go towards the basement where Mr. Gigliotti, with the two Gigliotti children, is counting money from his Snackmobile business. He hears his wife scream, "Tom, Tom, it's a hold-up", and immediately gets and loads his gun. Mr. Gigliotti fires two shots at the gunmen and then retreats into his basement office. He fires three more shots when they attempt to force the door of his basement office, and the gunmen flee just before the police arrive.¹

Oakland, California, July 1971. It's 5:00 in the morning and Mrs. Eugenia Valentini, 69, awakes to find a man in her room. She cries out for her daughter;

"Anna! Anna, get your gun!" Miss Valentini hears the commotion and comes to her mother's room. When the intruder comes toward her, she runs to her room to get her 22-caliber pistol. In her room she fells the criminal with one shot. Then, as he struggles to get up and escape, she fires another shot over his head and halts his escape until the police arrive.²

A suburb of Gainesville, Florida, it's 9:25 at night, in October, 1971. W. B. "Bill" Belote, a druggist, and his two sons, Billy, 21 and Kenny, 16, are watching television when a masked gunman rushes into the room. The three Belotes are forced to lie on the floor and are tied up. The gunman and an accomplice, each armed with a .38, then ransack the house. One of the gunman takes Belote's keys and with young Kenny as a hostage leaves for the drugstore that is just two blocks away. Bill Belote is put in a bedroom after pretending to be ill. When alone, he manages to get his pocket-knife and cut his bonds. Once loose, Belote gets a 20 gauge shotgun and shoots the gunman when he comes into the bedroom with his gun ready to fire. In the meantime, Billy has gotten loose, gotten a family .30 caliber carbine and raced to the drugstore to rescue his brother. Young Billy shoots the other gunman as he comes out of the drugstore, still holding Kenny hostage. The two gunmen both die later of their wounds.³

Countless other examples could be cited in which lawabiding citizens have been able to protect themselves and their loved ones from tragedy, because they were armed.

But even as the crime rates soar, we are deluged from every side with demands that guns be taken from the people so that the criminals will be disarmed. Ignored is the simple fact that the criminals who murder, rape and rob would benefit greatly if people were disarmed. They do not respect or obey laws and laws disarming people would be disregarded and circumvented by criminals. It is only the lawabiding citizen who would be disarmed and he is already the victim--rather than the culprit.

The truth of this should be apparent to any thinking person and the example of New York City offers clear and shocking proof.

Just after the turn of the century, "Big Tim" Sullivan, a New York City Tammany Hall politician who had moved up to the State government in Albany, was able to get the Sullivan Act of 1911 passed. This law made it a crime for a citizen of New York State to own a handgun, even for the protection of his home--unless he was granted a permit by the local bureaucrats. Today, six decades after the Sullivan Law went into effect, New York City which has additional city ordinances against the private ownership of firearms, should be a sterling example of law and order--if disarming the lawabiding citizen will disarm the criminal. In a population of almost 8 million people, there are only 20,000 legal, privately owned handguns. The citizens of New York City are more completely disarmed than in any other major city in America--at least the

lawabiding citizen is.

Murder, robbery and aggravated assault are the crimes in which a firearm is most often used by the assailant, and it is these three categories; murder, robbery and aggravated assault, that we will use in our grouping of violent crimes.

In the New York City area, the rate of violent crimes in 1971 was 1,111.6 cases per 100,000 population.⁴ In New York City, where the people have been deprived of firearms for personal protection, during 1971 one person out of every hundred was either murdered, robbed or a victim of aggravated assault. And the situation is rapidly growing worse--for the lawabiding citizen of New York City, who lives in the most disarmed and violent crime ridden city in America.

The Birmingham, Alabama area offers an interesting contrast to New York. It is an urban, industrialized area of over 3/4 million people---people who can still exercise their right to own firearms for protection. And the "official" attitude toward guns is quite different.

The Birmingham Fraternal Order of Police carry on their "On Target" program, a two session course for ladies that teaches the proper use of handguns.⁵ Over 3,000 Birmingham ladies have gone through the course since its beginning in 1968. The rate of violent crimes in the Birmingham area, where the citizens have not been disarmed by the politicians, was 368.5 cases per 100,000 population in 1971⁶--less than 1/3 the rate in the New York City area.

Across the nation, headlines show the fearful toll being taken daily by the lawless. In every state, in cities large and small, in rural areas and urban areas, the chances of your being the victim of a violent crime is increasing--as it has for a decade. From a rate of 147.4 incidents of murder, robbery or aggravated assault per 100,000 population in 1961,⁷ the rate has risen every year, trending upward dramatically to 372.4 per 100,000 people in 1971.⁸ This is an incredible increase of 152% in just 10 years. This rise in violent crimes is a threatening problem and it threatens everyone. An explanation of WHY the increase may help in suggesting a solution. During the period of this shocking rise in the crime rate, a series of decisions by the Warren-led Supreme Court, struck blow after blow at the efforts of law enforcement agencies. The court seemed to look at the apprehension and conviction of criminals as some sort of game, in which the object was not to determine the guilt or innocence of the accused but how the police played the game. These radical court decisions have decreased the chances of a criminal being convicted of his crime and increased the chances that if convicted, he will be turned loose as the result of some technicality. For the few who fail to "beat the rap", the time spent in prison has decreased drastically. During the decade of the 60's, the courts looked at the criminal as someone to be pampered and coddled and cared for, as if he were some valuable national asset. Not surprisingly, crime has surged upward constantly. But then, the well known adage CRIME DOES NOT PAY just simply is no longer true.

But the anti-gun zealots go on parroting the same old slogans---demanding steps that would ultimately lead to the disarming of the people of America. Can they actually be so naive as to think that the criminals will dutifully register and turn in their weapons?

When John F. Kennedy, President of the United

States, was murdered on November 22, 1963, while on a political tour in Dallas, Texas, BAN GUNS was the hysterical cry of the anti-gun fanatics. And they continued that demand even after it was discovered that the assassin, Lee Harvey Oswald, was a Marxist-Communist who would not have been deterred or even hindered in obtaining a weapon to perform his task, under any circumstances or imaginable laws.

When Martin Luther King, the prominent and controversial civil rights proponent was murdered in Atlanta, Georgia on April 4, 1968, BAN GUNS was the wail of the zealots. And their emotion-closed minds remained blind to logic and facts, even when it was discovered that the murderer, James Earl Ray, was an escaped criminal and already in violation of numerous gun laws, including the prohibition of firearms to convicted felons.

The assassination of Robert F. Kennedy in Los Angeles, California on June 4, 1968, in a hotel corridor while surrounded by body guards and secret service men, brought the same old cries of BAN GUNS from the anti-gun fanatics. They continued their hysterical wailing even after it was revealed that the assassin, Sirhan Sirhan, was already in violation of a number of firearm laws, including; possession of a firearm by an alien, carrying a concealed weapon, carrying a loaded weapon in an incorporated area and carrying a loaded weapon in a public place. But the brutal murders of John Kennedy, Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy, the last two coming just weeks apart, provided added fuel for the anti-gun fanatics and their propaganda barrage reached unparalleled proportions.

A full page ad in the Los Angeles Times calling for the disarming of all Americans was just one of many such ads that appeared in newspapers and other publications across the nation. To take advantage of this massive propaganda campaign, Congressman Emanuel Celler, Democrat from New York, less than one week after the assassination of Senator Kennedy, introduced an ill-conceived and hastily drawn piece of legislation identified as HR 17735.⁹ In just over four months, the legislation proposed by Celler emerged as the Gun Control Act of 1968. Although it contained serious encroachments against the constitutionally guaranteed right of the citizen to keep and bear arms, the Gun Control Act of 1968 was hailed by its proponents as a major weapon against the lawless elements in our society. Just what has it accomplished since its enactment? The Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms Division of the Treasury Department is the Federal Agency responsible for the enforcement of the 1968 Gun Control Act.

The ATFD Bureaucracy has doubled in size since 1968, but it has had no apparent positive effect on activities of the criminal element. The rate of violent crimes in 1968 was 279.5 per 100 thousand. It mushroomed upward in 1969, higher in 1970 and to the rate of 372.4 per 100 thousand in 1971---an increase of 33% in three years.

The ATFD hasn't hampered the criminals, but it has taken on the appearance of a potential federal storm trooper corps by its arrests of over 5,000 persons during the first 2 1/2 years after passage of the Gun Control Act of 1968.¹⁰ Arrests not for murder, robbery or aggravated assault, but for some violation of provisions of the Gun Control Act of 1968.

Kenyon Ballew, a young honorably discharged Air Force veteran, is one of those whose life has been

tragically effected by the actions of ATFD agents.

Ken Ballew, his wife and two small children lived in a small apartment on Quebec Terrace in Silver Springs, Maryland, a suburb of Washington D. C. On the night of June 7, 1971, Ken Ballew was taking a bath. Mrs. Ballew had just finished her bath and was in the kitchen, when suddenly she heard pounding and shouting at her backdoor. In a few moments the shouting stopped and a battering ram began smashing at the door---until finally it was battered open. The first intruder into the Ballew home was bearded, wearing a yellow sweatshirt and carrying a hand-gun. Behind him was a second intruder, wearing a striped shirt. Mrs. Ballew screamed for help and fled to a bedroom. Ken Ballew, responding to his wife's cries, came out of the bathroom, grabbed a replica cap and ball pistol from his gun collection, and then turned to face the intruders. In the scene of total confusion that followed, six intruders fired a hail of bullets at Mr. Ballew, one of the bullets striking him in the head. Ballew fired a single shot which hit the floor by his left foot. As it turned out, the Ballews should not have been upset by this invasion of their home, for the intruders were merely ATFD agents and their cohorts. The intruders even had a search warrant---issued on the basis of claims by unidentified informants that Ken Ballew had an arsenal of unregistered dangerous weapons in his home, in violation of the Gun Control Act of 1968.

The Ballew apartment was demolished by the ATFD agents in a search for the supposed illegal weapons. While this was taking place, Ken Ballew was rushed to the hospital and Mrs. Ballew was taken to jail. Later at the hospital, Mrs. Ballew and Ballew's father maintained their lonely vigil while Ken lay in the intensive care department, following surgery to save his life. Ken Ballew and his wife lived through their terrifying experience with the ATFD, but their lives have been tragically altered. The bullet in Ken Ballew's brain caused permanent damage that will effect him the rest of his life.¹¹ In the year since he was shot, no formal charges have been filed against Ballew--or against his assailants.

The politicians response when the Gun Control Act of 1968 proved ineffective in curbing the rise in the rate of violent crimes, was almost predictable. They used that failure as a springboard to justify the host of new and even more restrictive bills they introduced into Congress. Proposed new laws that would require registration of all firearms, and even some that would prohibit the private ownership of any kind of firearm--proposals that would, if enacted into law, only be observed by the lawabiding people who are the victims now of the criminals.

Senator Birch Bayh of Indiana, a long-time anti-gun zealot, introduced a new proposal that was identified as S. 2507 and then referred to the Committee on the Judiciary, of which Senator Bayh is a member. Bayh as Chairman of a sub-committee, presided over the hearings that were held in September, October and November of 1971 on his bill. The 432 page report of those hearings reveals the incredible one-sidedness of the show staged by Senator Bayh.

Testimony was taken from more than 20 people, each of whom appeared by invitation of the Committee--and only 2 spoke against Bayh's proposed bill. Then the March 1972 issue of Reader's Digest, boasting 29 million copies in 13 languages, ran a 5 page sensational

ized article boosting the idea of further restrictive gun legislation.¹² But the Bayh bill was destined to defeat, unless something spectacular could be turned to its aid.

The attempted assassination of Governor George Wallace on Monday, May 15th in Maryland while campaigning for the Democratic Presidential nomination, provided the needed incident.

BAN GUNS was the instant cry from the anti-gun zealots and the emotional state of the American people lent added impact at this crucial moment. Even the Wall Street Journal, in front page articles on Thursday and Friday of the same week as the attempt on Governor Wallace's life, took up the cry against guns.¹³ Completely dismissed was the fact that Arthur Bremer, the criminal, was already violating a number of stiff gun laws by having the gun and carrying it concealed. But then a person who would attempt to assassinate a Presidential Candidate obviously does not believe in obeying laws---any laws.

But, Senator Bayh's proposed bill came out of committee and came before the Senate. There on August 9, 1972, the Senators gave their approval to S.2507. Both Senators from 29 states and one Senator from 12 other states, each of whom took an oath of office to defend the rights of the people, supported this further restriction of the right of people to keep and bear arms.¹⁴

Their excuse was the same one that is always used. They are trying to protect the people from those terrible criminals---the ones who kill, rob and rape, but who for some strange reason are expected to register and even surrender their guns. That is preposterous.

During 1971, there were 261,750 cases of murder, robbery and aggravated assault in the United States, in which a firearm was used by the culprit.¹⁵ But, there are estimated to be 50,000,000 gun-owners in the United States--and even if each crime was committed by a different person, only 1/2 of 1% of the gun-owners abused the right to own a gun. But the anti-gun zealots persist in their proposals which would disarm only the law-abiding citizen--the one on whom the responsibility of protecting loved ones rests most heavily. Some of the anti-gun zealots even admit that the total disarming of the people is their objective. They should re-read some history--or is it possible that they already have?

When Hitler came to power in Germany, he did not move immediately to consolidate his power over the people---probably because he could not have done so with impunity. Hitler's government issued sweeping new gun control laws on March 18, 1938, that permitted guns to be had only by "deputies of the Fuehrer, officials of the National Socialist German Worker Party, the Reichsminister of the Luftwaffe, members of the army, the police, the whole S.S. and S.A., employees of the Department of Justice, border guards, and officials of the Hitler Youth." ¹⁶

Everyone else had to have a Gun Possession Permit and a Gun Ownership Permit, which could be issued only by the Hitler government. As the law-abiding citizens were denied permits, they dutifully turned in their guns. Thus, with all the trappings of legality, the millions of Germans who might have opposed Hitler's madness, for only a small percentage of the people ever held positions in the Nazi Party and government, were stripped of any effective means of doing so. The rest is well known history. Hitler came to total power in

Germany and plunged that nation down the path of conquest that eventually swept the world into the holocaust of global war. After that war ended, a Communist regime came to power in Czechoslovakia. But the enslavement of the people of that nation was not completed until October of 1949. That was when the Communist government ordered the Czechs, who had already registered their guns, to surrender them¹⁷--- and like good law-abiding citizens, they did so. This tragic pattern is not at all unusual for the absolute control of the private citizen that is the goal of every form of totalitarianism, cannot be achieved when the citizen is armed and able to defend his freedom.

The people of America are the best armed private citizens in the world, with an estimated 50,000,000 of them owning guns. The anti-gun fanatics point to this in horror and scream that something must be done to disarm the people. They fail to recognize an obvious parallel. The people in America are better armed than any other people in the world and the people in America enjoy greater personal freedom than any other people in the world. Freedom that comes not from their government, but from effective restraints on their government. Keeping that freedom requires constant vigil. The National Rifle Association has been active in helping to protect the right of the citizen to keep and bear arms since its organization in 1871. The NRA is located in Washington D. C. at 1600 Rhode Island Ave., N. W. and is reported to have about one million members---people from every walk of life who share an interest in preserving their right to own a gun. Members of the NRA receive the American Rifleman, a monthly magazine that keeps them informed on many matters that deal with guns, including proposed legislation.

The National Association to Keep and Bear Arms, usually referred to as the NAKBA, is another national organization dedicated to preserving the right guaranteed by the 2nd Amendment. NAKBA is located in Medford, Oregon at 909 North Central and is more of a citizen action organization. Its monthly newsletter, the Armed Citizen News, tells of member activities across the nation and focuses attention on political attempts to infringe on the right of people to keep and bear arms.

NAKBA distributes a wide assortment of materials, has a speakers bureau of qualified spokesmen on the subject of private gun ownership and is very active in direct action campaigns. Members of NAKBA gathered over 1 1/2 million signatures on their petition to the Congress calling for repeal of the Gun Control Act of 1968 and spearheaded the move to recall Senator Hart of Michigan, one of the more radical anti-gun zealots in Congress. NAKBA and the NRA are focal points for those who work to preserve the right to keep and bear arms. For those who recognize that history shows conclusively that armed citizens are best able to defend their loved ones and their freedom from political charlatans and criminals. And that remaining a nation of well armed citizens is the best way to insure that the stars and stripes will continue to wave over a nation that is truly "the land of the free and the home of the brave."

FOOTNOTES

1. Evening Gazette (Worcester, Mass.), March 6, 1972, pg. 1
2. Stockton Record (Stockton, Calif.), June 22, 1971
3. Gainesville Sun (Gainesville, Florida), October 12, 1971, pg. 4B
4. Crime In The U. S. / Uniform Crime Reports-1971, pg. 88
5. American Rifleman, June 1972, pg. 59
6. Op. Cit. , pg. 79
7. Op. Cit. , pg 61
8. Ibid.
9. Congressional Record-House, June 10, 1968, pg. 16478
10. How Gun Laws Can Hang You!, by Joseph J. Wase. Guns & Ammo September 1972, pg. 40
11. American Rifleman, July 1971, August 1971, and September 1971
12. How Many More Must Die Before Congress Acts?, by Trevor Armbrister, Readers Digest, March 1972, pp. 96-100
13. Wall Street Journal, May 18 & 19, 1972
14. Congressional Record-Senate, August 9, 1972, pg. S13177
15. Crime In The U. S. / Uniform Crime Reports-1971, pp 9, 12 & 15
16. Guns and Dictatorship, by Alan Stang, Review of the News, October 4, 1967, pp. 15-20
17. Valley Times (Los Angeles, Calif.) October 12, 1949 (AP)

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